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Washington, DC - Today Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) continued to press for information on the status of an ongoing Department of Labor investigation into Agriprocessors, Inc., for violations at their Postville plant.

Braley originally wrote a letter to Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao and other federal officials on May 15th.

According to media reports, the Department of Labor was conducting an investigation-independent of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's investigation-into possible labor law violations, including illegal child labor, at the Agriprocessors plant. However, the May 14th Des Moines Register stated that "federal officials put the case 'on hold.'"

A copy of the letter is attached to this message. The text of the letter is below:

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June 24, 2008

Elaine L. Chao

Secretary of Labor

U.S. Department of Labor

Frances Perkins Bldg., 200 Constitution Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20210

Julie Myers

Assistant Secretary

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

425 I Street, NW

Washington, DC 20001

Matt M. Dummermuth

United States Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa

Department of Justice

Hach Bldg, Suite 400, 401 1st Street, S.E.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401-1825

Dear Secretary of Labor Chao, Assistant Secretary Myers, and U.S. Attorney Dummermuth:

I am following up on a letter I wrote to you regarding the status of any ongoing investigations into the Agriprocessors processing plant in Postville, Iowa. I originally sent this letter on May 15, 2008, and then I sent a follow-up letter on June 3, 2008, again requesting the same information as in the original letter.

It has now been over a month since my letter to you, and I have yet to receive any kind of written response, except for a "knowledge of receipt" letter from the Department of Justice, with a workflow reference number of 1393444.

For the third time now, I request information regarding an ongoing U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) investigation at Agriprocessors, as well as whether Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) communicated with DOL prior to the ICE enforcement action at Agriprocessors on May 12, 2008.

I would appreciate a response to the questions from my original letter as soon as possible. Following is the text of the original letter:

Last November, I wrote to Acting Secretary Connor of the U.S. Department of Agriculture concerning Agriprocessors, the world's largest kosher meat processor based in Postville, Iowa. At the time, the focus of my attention was on the 250-plus Noncompliance Records (NRs), as well as Letters of Warning to Agriprocessors dealing with food safety.

On Monday, May 12th, the Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) executed a worksite enforcement action at this same facility and arrested more than 300 workers on criminal and immigration violations.

It has been reported that the Department of Labor (DOL) was involved in a separate ongoing investigation of possible labor law violations, including illegal child labor, in the Agriprocessors plant. On Wednesday, May 14th the Des Moines Register reported that 12 juveniles between the ages of 15 and 17 were detained during the enforcement action at Agriprocessors.

In a separate article in yesterday's Des Moines Register, reporter Clark Kauffman summarized Agriprocessors "history of noncompliance with state and federal regulations related to food safety, pollution and workplace safety at its Postville facility..." (see attached article). The most recent violations included citations by the Iowa Department of Labor Services for 39 violations of workplace safety rules and a proposed \$182,000 fine. The article states, "Federal officials put the case 'on hold.'"

I would like to know whether ICE communicated with DOL prior to the enforcement action on May 12th. Also, what is the status of these DOL investigations? Is there any coordination going on between ICE, DOJ, and DOL as they presumably continue their investigations related to Agriprocessors?

It is important that both the ICE and DOL investigations continue. I firmly believe that any possible violations of labor law, immigration law, and workplace safety laws should be investigated and prosecuted to the full extent of the law. I urge you to look into this matter and look forward to hearing from you within the next ten days. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

If I do not hear from you within the next ten days, I will refer this information to the House Committees that have jurisdiction over these labor, immigration, and workplace safety issues. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bruce Braley

Member of Congress

Cc: Kristine Iverson, Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor

Cc: Ricardo Velazquez, Office of Congressional Relations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Cc: Keith B. Nelson, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Office of Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of Justice